

## **REMARKS**

### **Status**

The Office Action dated October 19, 2006 (the "Office Action") has been carefully reviewed. The Applicants note with appreciation the allowability of claims 9, 12-13, 15 and 17-18 if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1-8, 10-11, 14 and 16 have been canceled. Claims 9, 12 and 15 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 9, 12-13, 15 and 17-18 are pending in this application. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

### **Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102**

#### The Rejection of Claims 2-3 under 102(b)

In the Office Action, claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,641,156 to Hoisington et al. (hereinafter "Hoisington"). Claims 2-3 have been cancelled. The rejection of claims 2-3 under 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,641,156 to Hoisington is now believed to be moot.

### **Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103**

Rejection to claims 1 and 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1 and 5-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of US Patent No. 5,392,065 to Suzuki (hereinafter "Suzuki"). Claims 1 and 5-6 have been cancelled. The rejection of claims 1 and 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of US Patent No. 5,489,925 to Brooks et al (hereinafter "Brooks"). Claim 4 has been cancelled. The rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Brooks is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claims 7 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of US Patent No. 6,883,905 to Kimura et al (hereinafter "Kimura"). Claims 7 and 16 have been cancelled. The rejection of claims 7 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Kimura is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Kimura and further in view of US Patent No. 6,056,394 to Rousseau et al (hereinafter "Rousseau"). Claim 8 has been cancelled. The rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Kimura and further in view of Rousseau is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Brooks. Claim 10 has been cancelled. The rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Brooks is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Rousseau. Claim 11 has been cancelled. The rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Suzuki and further in view of Rousseau is now believed to be moot.

Rejection to Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Rousseau. Claim 14 has been cancelled. The rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoisington in view of Rousseau is now believed to be moot.

**Allowable Subject Matter.**

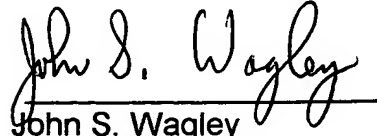
The Applicants note with appreciation the allowability of claims 9, 12-13, 15 and 17-18 if rewritten in independent form. Claims 9, 12 and 15 have been amended and rewritten in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 13 is dependent on rewritten claim 12 and is therefore believed to be in allowable form. Claim 17 is dependent on rewritten claim 15 and is therefore believed to be in allowable form. Claim 18 is dependent on rewritten claim 15 and claim 17 and is therefore believed to be in allowable form.

**Conclusion**

For the reasons set forth above, all pending claims have been amended and are patentable over all references of record. Reexamination and allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Amendment  
November 30, 2006

Respectfully submitted,  
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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John S. Wagley", written over a horizontal line.

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